Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (*Currently amended*) A shopping assistance method, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

sending an enquiry message from an enquirer to a service system, the enquiry message including a description of an item of interest including both a machine readable structured data part and unstructured data comprising <u>at least one of</u> image ~~and/or~~ <u>and</u> audio data which unstructured data is of a type capable of ~~at least one of for~~ human interpretation at the service system, automatically:

(a)   determining a location associated with the enquiry,

(b)   selecting from a database of traders, <u>multiple</u> traders appropriate to the enquiry at least in terms of location and the type of the item of interest, and

(c)   forwarding both the structured data part and the unstructured data concerning the description of the item of interest to ~~the selected~~ <u>said multiple</u> traders in an availability enquiry; and

[[(d)]]

providing a way for the selected traders to respond to the enquiry.

2. (*Original*) A method according to claim 1, wherein said location is the location of the enquirer.

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3.   (*Original*) A method according to claim 2, wherein the enquiry message is sent from a mobile entity over a cellular radio infrastructure to the service system, the latter determining the location of the enquirer from a location server of the cellular radio infrastructure.

4. (*Original*) A method according to claim 1, wherein said location is a shopping location identified in the enquiry message by the enquirer.

5. (*Currently amended*) A method according to claim 1, wherein the enquiry message includes a structured data part containing at least one type parameter for the item of interest, the service system [[and]] selecting said multiple traders by using the at least one parameter.

6. (*Currently amended*) A method according to claim 1, wherein the service system is operative to process processes said description to extract at least one type parameter for the item of interest and selecting selects said multiple traders by using the at least one parameter.

7. (*Currently amended*) A method according to claim 1, wherein said availability enquiry includes contact information enabling any of said selected trader multiple traders to directly contact the enquirer to inform the latter, on the basis of the description contained in the availability enquiry, about the availability through the trader of items of the same type as the item of interest.

8. (*Currently amended*) A method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said selected trader multiple traders, on the basis of the description contained in the availability

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enquiry, sends a response to the service system giving information about the availability through the trader of items of the same type as the item of interest.

9. (*Original*) A method according to claim **8**, wherein the service system forwards said response to the enquirer.

10. (*Original*) A method according to claim 8, wherein the service system stores said response and the enquirer subsequently contacts the service system and retrieves the response.

11. (*Currently amended*) A method according to claim **8**, wherein more than one of said multiple ~~selected~~ traders provide respective responses to the service system, the service system collating the responses and forwarding them to the enquirer.

12. (*Currently amended*) A method according to claim **8**, wherein more than one of said multiple ~~selected~~ traders provide respective responses to the service system, the service system collating the responses and storing them, the enquirer subsequently contacting the service system and retrieving the collated responses.

13. (*Previously presented*) A method according to claim **8**, wherein the enquirer, having received said response via the service system and having decided that the response is of interest, directly contacts the trader concerned using trader contact information contained in the response.

14. (*Original*) A method according to claim **13**, wherein direct contact is established by at least one of telephone, voice mail, fax, or e-mail.

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15. (*Previously presented*) A method according to claim **8**, wherein the enquirer, having received said response via the service system and having decided that the response is of interest, requests the service system to establish direct live communication between the enquirer and trader concerned, the service system thereupon serving to mediate the establishment of direct live contact.

16. (*Original*) A method according to claim **15**, wherein direct contact is established as a voice circuit via a telephone system, the service system interacting with a call setup interface of the telephone system to set up said voice circuit.

17. (*Previously presented*) A method according to claim **8**, wherein the enquirer, having received said response via the service system and having decided that the response is of interest, requests the trader concerned, via service system, to establish direct communication with the enquirer, this request including contact information for enabling the trader to contact the enquirer.

18. (*Currently amended*) A method according to claim **1**, wherein <u>at least one of</u> said ~~selected trader~~ <u>multiple traders</u>, on the basis of the description contained in the availability enquiry, sends a response to the enquirer, either directly or via said service system, giving a Universal Resource Identifier where the enquirer can find information about items of the same type as the item of interest that are available through the trader.

19. (*Previously presented*) A method according to claim **18**, wherein the enquirer uses said Universal Resource Identifier to access said information.

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20. (*Previously presented*) A method according to claim **1**, wherein the service system, in sending said availability enquiry, does not disclose the identity of the enquirer.

21. (*Currently amended*) A shopping-assistance service system, comprising:

an enquiry-receiving subsystem for receiving an enquiry message from a remote enquirer over a communications network, the enquiry message including a description of an item of interest comprising both a machine readable structured data part and unstructured data comprising at least one of image and audio data, which unstructured data is of a type capable of human interpretation;

a memory for at least temporarily storing said description;

a location subsystem for automatically determining a location associated with the enquiry,

a trader selection subsystem for automatically selecting from a database of traders, multiple traders appropriate to the enquiry at least in terms of location and the type of the item of interest, and

an output subsystem for forwarding both the structured data part and the unstructured data concerning the description of the item of interest to the selected said multiple traders in an availability enquiry; and

an enquirer-contact subsystem for providing a way for the selected said multiple traders to respond to the enquiry.

22. (*Currently amended*) A system according to claim **21**, further including a mobile entity for sending the enquiry message over a cellular radio infrastructure to the service system, the location subsystem of the service system being operative to determine the location of the enquirer from a location server of the cellular radio infrastructure.

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23.   (Original) A system according to claim **21**, wherein said location is included in the enquiry message and the location subsystem is operative to extract this location from the enquiry message.

24. (Currently amended) A system according to claim **21**, wherein the enquiry message includes a structured data part including at least one type parameter for the item of interest, the trader selection subsystem being operative to access this type parameter and use it in selecting said multiple traders.

25. (Original) A system according to claim **21**, wherein the enquirer-contact subsystem is operative to cause the output subsystem to include enquirer contact details in said availability enquiry.

26. (Currently amended) A system according to claim **21**, wherein the enquirer-contact subsystem is operative to receive responses from ~~the selected~~ said multiple traders and to make them available, either individually or as a collation, to the enquirer.

27. (Currently amended) A system according to claim **26**, wherein the ~~enquirer control~~ enquirer-contact subsystem is operative to make the trader responses available to the enquirer by forwarding them over a communications network towards the enquirer.

28. (Original) A system according to claim **26**, wherein the enquirer-contact subsystem is operative to make the trader responses available by storing them at the service system for retrieval by the enquirer.

29. (Original) A system according to claim **26**, wherein the enquirer-contact subsystem is further operative, in responsive to the enquirer indicating that they wish to

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contact the trader who originated a particular said response, to mediate the establishment of direct live contact between the enquirer and that trader.

30. (*Original*) A system according to claim **29**, wherein the enquirer-contact subsystem is operative to mediate the establishment of direct live contact by interacting with a call setup interface of a telephone network system to set up a voice circuit between the enquirer and trader.

31. (*Original*) A system according to claim **29**, wherein the enquirer-contact subsystem is operative to mediate the establishment of direct live contact by sending a request to the trader concerned to establish direct communication with the enquirer, this request including contact information for enabling the trader to contact the enquirer.

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